

credited circles. Not that they cared for his reputation; not altogether, I am inclined to think, that they were determined to find fault with him. But such a course as this which he was pursuing would tend to break down all exclusiveness, and bring long-established and cherished class privileges into disrepute; and by and by it would come about that a man's place in society would not be fixed by his birth-rank, or his ecclesiastical distinction, or his wealth; but by his manhood, his knowledge, his purity, his character. Jesus paid no attention to this. He had a welcome for all who sought him—a word of instruction and comfort for all who looked up into his face in trust; and no communication of pardoning grace or healing, or guidance was ever kept back by him, because, according to human estimation a soul seemed to be so unworthy and degraded. He would eat with publicans. To the woman at the well, dissolute and Samaritan tho she was, he made wonderful disclosures concerning himself and God. Between a poor wretched sinner and her proud accusers he did not hesitate to stand. The common people heard him gladly, because they knew he did not spurn them; but met them, and talked to them in all fidelity, and yet in the accents of an infinite tenderness. Diseased men and passion-soiled men, knew he was not afraid of being contaminated by closeness of approach to them. He made them know it and feel it. We must, if we would be like Jesus, and do his blessed work.

A besetting peril is of trusting too much to organizations. Organizations are good, indispensable. To do anything well there must be plan and system. The home, the school, the mill, the store, the bank must have an orderly movement. It is not otherwise with the church. There must be method in work. There must be division of labor. Many things can be done only thru representatives and agents. No one man can be all the time everywhere. But the danger is of laying too much stress on organizations, and of over emphasizing fine plans. We may have an organization which will run with all the precision, but also with all the coldness of clock-work. That is not good. Organizations are sometimes made an excuse for evading or throwing off personal responsibility. That is not good. There are parents, for example, who neglect the religious training of their children on the ground that there is a Sabbath-school to do this work. There are men who justify themselves in doing nothing for temperance, because there are societies whose special business it is to look after liquor-sellers and drunkards. There are good, benevolent people who, when they think of some poor, struggling household which they would brighten with a gift, instead of going themselves and deliberately bestowing it with a "God bless you," send for an agent and use him as they would use a pair of tongs to put a lump of soft coal in the grate. There is loss in this. The cup of cold water is twice

sanctified if it be held out by a hand warm with genuine personal interest. The loaf of bread feeds a double hunger when it is given in the spirit of our Lord. This must not be overlooked. In all schemes of Christian activity the thing is to get men face to face, and hand to hand with their fellow-men; the good and the wise and the pure close up to the foolish and the fallen. In the last analysis, this business of helping men all turns on the out-go of personal force and affection. Organizations for church work approach the ideal just as they push men and women out, and set them down so close to other men and women who are to be cheered and saved that they can enter into their cares and mistakes and sorrows, and in their way make their love unmistakable.

Herein lies, in part, the solution of the much talked-of question of reaching the masses. It is not to be done by feeding out the sickening taffy of a gospel without a Christ. Not by beating the empty drums of a theology pithless of all rugged truth. Nor by performing acrobatic feats in the pulpit; nor by any legerdemain whatever. The masses reached in this way are, after all, not reached. It might as well be said that children are reached for school purposes when they are brought together in throngs for a picnic, and all energies are devoted to their amusement, and none to their instruction. The most effective agency or means for attracting men to the truth, and inspiring them with better purposes, is hearts alive with genuine sympathy and hands which do not disdain to touch other hands less clean. Make a church, in all its membership, warm with the love of God, and cold and shivering souls will somehow find their way into it. Make a church a real shelter for the fiercely tempted and the storm-smitten and, one by one, men and women will be glad of a housing under its roof. Make a church an actual refuge for those who feel that they are pursued by the avenger, and who are smarting already under the scourgings of a violated conscience and a broken law, and the poor panting fugitives will be sure to seek its protection. Make a church a true brotherhood, in which heart beats with heart, and hand clasps hand, and the joy of one is the joy of all, and tears, when they fall, have other tears to fall with them, and no harsh words are spoken, and there are no rivalries save to see who will help most, *and the circle will grow.*

The Psalms

Selected

The Psalms appear to stand out from all the literature of the world as the supreme and classic utterance of the vital piety of man. Not the nature worship, which personifies the external powers and phenomena of the visible world, and rises often into noble phrase and feeling; the Psalms are far away from this, tho sometimes assuming a guise of it. Not an evolved theology, with mysteries of faith and elaborate structure;

only germs of such things can be found in the Psalms.

But what we do find, over all, is the language of the soul, in the presence of its God and of his law, confronted with the serious problems and conditions of such a being; yet withal, a language of music, showing that the struggle has been conquered into harmony, and is so far expressing victory instead of mere warfare. This is their dominant key, and this assures them their place, the nearest to the heart, of all written speech, unless it be the very soul of the gospel itself.

Gentleness

Christian Advocate.

The strength of God is very gentle. He does not make a great noise in lifting the tides or in speeding the stars in their courses. The sunshine is one of his greatest treasures of power. He turns the hearts of stalwart sinners by the touch of infant fingers or by the memory of a pious mother's spiritual beauty and fidelity. By loving invitations, tender encouragements, and manifold ministries of patience and sympathy, he encourages the penitence and the faith of sinful and weak human hearts.

His children should seek more of his gentleness. We are too easily tempted to bluster and violence. We forget that gentleness is greatness as well as goodness. If we would do brave deeds, let us seek to be filled with divine gentleness.

Missions

From the National Capital

Since my last letter it has been my privilege to attend the convention at St. James, Maryland, and to spend a few days more in the Master's service at Linwood, same state.

The conference was not largely attended, but we feel that some work was done there that must produce good results if carried into effect by the pastors in their respective congregations. I refer more particularly to the resolutions urging all ministers to place the EVANGELIST in every home, if possible, and to take up collections quarterly for national missions. If all of the pastors put these resolutions into practice we will have a report to present at the next convention that will make all of us feel good.

We had expected to meet Brother Cassel, of Philadelphia, at this conference, but were disappointed on account of the continued ill health of Mrs. Cassel. The absence of Brother Cassel means no small loss to a convention. However we have much to feel thankful for, as the Lord in his goodness, opened the way for Brother Gnagey, our worthy editor, to be with us. Brother Henry Wise of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, was also present. I can safely say that the presence of these brethren meant a great deal to this conference. Brother Wise consented to come to Washington and fill my appointments